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EXAMINER
STERRETT, JONATHAN G

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3623	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Office Action Summary	09/778,311	CALLAHAN ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Jonathan G. Sterrett	3623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>07 February 2001</u>.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) <u>1-36</u> is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) <u>1-36</u> is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

      1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3)☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6)☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Summary

1.   Claims 1-36 are pending in the application.

Specification

2.   The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because line 1 contains the phrase 'a system ... is disclosed'. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for

all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

4.   Claims 1-9, 11-31 and 33-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as

being unpatentable over Whirlpool.com (Reference A: "KitchenAid Appliance

Repair Service Locator" archive.org website of 6/26/1997; Reference C:

Whirlpool webpage of commercial laundry equipments archive.org website of

5/6/1999; Reference D; Whirlpool webpage of commercial washer showing

picture of washer, archive.org website of 8/29/1999; Reference E; Whirlpool

website search engine, archive.org website of 1/17/1999; Reference F; Whirlpool

webpage of air conditioners hypertext links of specific models, archive.org

website of 4/29/1999) in view of Norand's mobile computing platform

(RapidRep™ field service management tool - Reference A: "Introducing the

Norand RapidRep™ solution from Intermec Technologies Corporation",

archive.org Norand.com website of 2/6/1998; Reference B: "Assessing your

needs", archive.org Norand.com website of 2/6/1998).

Regarding Claim 1, Whirlpool.com teaches receiving an appliance

selection request message from a client device via a wide area network

(Reference A, drop down menu constitutes application selection request) the

appliance selection request message being indicative of a desire to receive

appliance selection data, the appliance selection data facilitating selection of a

first home appliance (Reference A, drop down menu facilitates selection of

different kinds of home appliances); transmitting the appliance selection data to

the client device via the wide area network (Reference A webpage is in

communication with Whirlpool.com website) in response to receiving the

appliance selection request message; receiving an appliance identifier from the

client device via the wide area network, the appliance identifier distinguishing the

first home appliance from a second home appliance (Reference A, Whirlpool.com

website transmits data back to identify model and further enable customer to

diagnose problem, including distinguishing between different home appliances),

receiving a geographical identifier from the client device via the wide area

network (Reference B, Whirlpool.com website transmits zip code information

along with product type based on customer's input to identify a service locator).

Whirlpool.com does not teach determining at least one available repair time slot

based on the geographical identifier; transmitting data indicative of the at least

one available repair time slot to the client device via the wide area network; and

receiving time slot selection data from the client device via the wide area

network. Norand does teach determining at least one available repair time slot

based on the geographical identifier (Reference A paragraph 4 line 4, software

provides integrated information on location, schedule and workflow); transmitting

data indicative of the at least one available repair time slot to the client device via

the wide area network (Reference A paragraph 4 line 7, customer informed of

technician's estimated time of arrival). Norand doesn't explicitly teach receiving

time slot selection data from the client device. Norand does teach that their

approach to communicating technician ETA improves customer satisfaction

(Reference A paragraph 4 line 8, customer satisfaction improved). Thus, it would

have been obvious for the customer to reschedule and transmit time slot

selection data via the network to Norand's dispatcher if the technician's ETA is

unacceptable because it would improve customer satisfaction by allowing the

customer to select a more convenient time to schedule a service call. Norand

teaches that its systems improve productivity, quality and responsiveness

(Reference A paragraph 8 line 3) and that computer automation improves customer satisfaction by allowing customers to access service information on a service provider's computer (Reference B paragraph 1 line 10). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Whirlpool's website of identifying appliance selection and receiving geographic identifier data with Norand's system for scheduling service calls because it would improve a service provider's productivity, quality and responsiveness while also increasing customer satisfaction by linking scheduling a service provider based on their geographic proximity to the customer and increase customer satisfaction by giving the customer an opportunity to schedule a service call.

Regarding Claim 2, Whirlpool.com does not teach the step of dispatching an agent of an appliance repair provider based on the time slot selection data. Norand teaches the step of dispatching an agent of an appliance repair provider based on the time slot selection data (Reference A paragraph 4 line 4-5, dispatcher uses integrated information to dispatch technician based on location and schedule). Norand teaches its system of automation improves productivity (Reference A Paragraph 8 line 3) over manual management of repair personnel. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Whirlpool's invention to provide dispatching an agent of an appliance repair provider based on time slot selection data, as taught by Norand, because it would improve the productivity of service personnel and customer satisfaction by communicating a scheduled time for repair to the customer.

Regarding Claim 3, Whirlpool.com does not teach the step of repairing the

first home appliance, wherein the step of repairing the first home appliance is

performed after the step of receiving time slot selection data from the client

device via the wide area network. Norand teaches the step of repairing the first

home appliance (Reference A paragraph 1 line 7, systems designed for

appliance repair; Reference A paragraph 4 line 4-6, system provides integrated

scheduling and matches service orders with personnel). Norand does not

explicitly teach wherein the step of repairing the first home appliance is

performed after the step of receiving time slot selection data from the client

device via the wide area network. It is inherent in Norand's invention that

customers could request a rescheduled time slot over the wide area network to

the dispatcher upon receiving notification of the technician's ETA. Norand

teaches its system of automation improves productivity (Reference A Paragraph

8 line 3) over manual management of repair personnel. It would have been

obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify

Whirlpool's invention to provide repairing the first home appliance after receiving

time slot selection data from the client device via the network, as taught by

Norand, because it would improve the productivity of service personnel and

customer satisfaction by providing timely repair.

Regarding Claims 4 and 5, Whirlpool.com teaches the step of receiving an

appliance selection request message comprises: the step of receiving a

hypertext transport protocol (HTTP) message (Reference A, this webpage is

transmitted as an http message), as per Claim 4; the step of receiving an

appliance selection request message from a personal computer (PC), as per

Claim 5. It is inherent that Whirlpool's webpage would have been transmitted

from a client computer that is a PC because it is old and well known in the art

that PC's can locate and display webpages, including Whirlpool's webpage and

transmit the appliance selection request message.

Regarding Claim 6, Whirlpool.com teaches the step of transmitting the

appliance selection data comprises the step of transmitting web page data

(Reference A, webpage that transmits data back to the Whirlpool website).

Regarding Claim 7, Whirlpool.com teaches transmitting the appliance

selection data comprises the step of transmitting a list of model numbers.

Whirlpool's website (Reference C, hypertext links denote individual model

numbers) transmits model numbers.

Regarding Claim 8, Whirlpool.com does not teach receiving a user

identifier from the client device via the wide area network; and retrieving a list of

model numbers from a purchase history database based on the user identifier,

wherein the step of transmitting the appliance selection data comprises the step

of transmitting the list of model numbers retrieved from the purchase history

database. Norand teaches receiving a user identifier (Reference A paragraph 4

line 7, customer service order) from the client device via the wide area network

(Reference A paragraph 4 line 3, data communication via network); and

retrieving a list of model numbers from a purchase history database based on the

user identifier (Reference A paragraph 2 line 8, technicians have access to

customer service history, including model numbers), wherein the step of

transmitting the appliance selection data comprises the step of transmitting the list of model numbers retrieved from the purchase history database. Norand teaches its system of automation improves productivity (Reference A Paragraph 8 line 3) over manual management of repair personnel. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Whirlpool's invention to provide a list of model numbers from a purchase history database based on a user identifier, as taught by Norand, because it would improve the productivity of service personnel by quickly identifying what models the customer had based on their purchase history.

Regarding Claim 9, Whirlpool.com teaches transmitting the appliance selection data comprises the step of transmitting a digital picture of an appliance (Reference D, digital picture of commercial washer).

Regarding Claim 11, Whirlpool teaches wherein the step of transmitting the appliance selection data comprises the step of transmitting data indicative of a search engine query area (Reference E: keyword search input on Whirlpool's webpage).

Regarding Claim 12, Whirlpool teaches wherein the step of receiving an appliance identifier comprises the step of receiving an appliance model number (Reference C: commercial washer webpage identifies washers by model number; each model number is hypertext link corresponding with transmitting a request to display that model's detailed webpage).

Regarding Claim 13, Whirlpool teaches wherein the step of receiving an appliance identifier comprises the step of receiving an identifier associated with

the appliance selection data (Reference C: selecting model number as identifier

constitutes selection data).

Regarding Claim 14, Whirlpool teaches wherein the step of receiving a

geographical identifier comprises the step of receiving a zip code (Reference B:

zip code input area).

Regarding Claim 15, Whirlpool does not teach wherein the step of

determining at least one available repair time slot based on the appliance

identifier comprises the step of querying a database of predetermined appliance

repair providers for a particular appliance repair provider associated with the

appliance identifier. Norand teaches wherein the step of determining at least one

available repair time slot based on the appliance identifier comprises the step of

querying a database of predetermined appliance repair providers (Reference B

line 10: system creates and maintains important customer databases, including

assigned service representative) for a particular appliance repair provider

associated with the appliance identifier (Reference A paragraph 4 line 4, system

provides dispatchers integrated information on schedule and workflow;

Reference A paragraph 2 line 8, customer service history and parts availability,

including for customer's particular product model). Norand teaches its system of

automation improves productivity (Reference A Paragraph 8 line 3) over manual

service management of repair personnel. It would have been obvious to one of

ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Whirlpool's invention

to provide determining one available repair time based on appliance repair

providers associated with an appliance identifier, as taught by Norand, because it

would improve the productivity of service personnel by identifying a repair time

based on their familiarity with that particular appliance.

Regarding Claim 16, Whirlpool does not teach wherein the step of

determining at least one available repair time slot further comprises the step of

receiving schedule data from the particular appliance repair provider. Norand

teaches wherein the step of determining at least one available repair time slot

further comprises the step of receiving schedule data from the particular

appliance repair provider (Reference A paragraph 4 line 4, system provides

dispatchers integrated information on schedule and workflow; Reference A

paragraph 4 line 7, dispatcher informs customer of technician's estimated time of

arrival). Norand teaches its system of automation improves productivity

(Reference A Paragraph 8 line 3) over manual service management of repair

personnel. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the

time of the invention to modify Whirlpool's invention to provide determining a

repair time slot based on a the schedule of a particular appliance repair provider,

as taught by Norand, because it would improve the productivity of service

personnel by scheduling repair visits based on their availability.

Regarding Claim 17, Whirlpool does not teach wherein the step of

determining at least one available repair time slot based on the appliance

identifier and the geographical identifier comprises the step of querying a

database of predetermined appliance repair providers for a particular appliance

repair provider associated with the geographical identifier. Norand teaches the

step of querying a database (Reference B line 6, database of customer

information) of predetermined appliance repair providers for a particular

appliance repair provider associated with the geographical identifier (Reference

A paragraph 4 line 4-5; detailed maps in system enable dispatcher to match

service locations with appropriate service personnel; Reference A paragraph 4

line 7, dispatcher alerts customer of technician's ETA). Norand teaches its

system of automation improves productivity (Reference A Paragraph 8 line 3)

over manual management of repair personnel. It would have been obvious to

one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Whirlpool's

invention to provide an appliance service provider associated with a geographical

identifier, as taught by Norand, because it would improve the productivity of

service personnel by optimizing their service schedule based on geographic

proximity to service call locations.

Regarding Claim 18, Whirlpool does not teach wherein the step of

determining at least one available repair time slot further comprises the step of

receiving schedule data from the particular appliance repair provider. Norand

teaches wherein the step of determining at least one available repair time slot

further comprises the step of receiving schedule data from the particular

appliance repair provider (Reference A paragraph 4 line 3-4, system integrates

service personnel with dispatchers in regards to schedule). Norand teaches its

system of automation improves productivity (Reference A Paragraph 8 line 3)

over manual service management of repair personnel. It would have been

obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify

Whirlpool's invention to provide a repair time comprised of receiving schedule

data from an appliance service provider, as taught by Norand, because it would

improve the productivity of service personnel by taking their schedule availability

into account when scheduling service calls.

Regarding Claim 19, Whirlpool teaches transmitting web page data.

Whirlpool does not teach transmitting data indicative of the at least one available

repair time slot. Norand teaches transmitting data indicative of the at least one

available repair time slot (Reference A paragraph 4 line 5-6, dispatcher alerts

customer of technician's estimated time of arrival). Norand teaches its system of

automation improves productivity (Reference A Paragraph 8 line 3) over manual

service management of repair personnel. It would have been obvious to one of

ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Whirlpool's invention

to provide transmitting indicative of at least one available time slot, as taught by

Norand, because it would improve the productivity of service personnel and

increase customer satisfaction by communicating an available time slot to the

customer.

Regarding Claim 20, Whirlpool teaches a device comprising:

a receiver structured to receive a plurality of messages from a client device via a

wide area network (Reference A: internet webpage can transmit a plurality of

messages based on which model is selected; these messages are transmitted

back to the Whirlpool server, i.e. receiver); a message decoder operatively

coupled to the receiver (Reference A: internet webpage is received by

Whirlpool's internet server and decoded), the message decoder being structured

to decode an appliance selection request message (Reference A: "Appliance

Selection" drop down menu), an appliance identification message (Reference B:

"Product" drop down menu), a geographical identification message (Reference B:

"Zip Code" entry form), the appliance selection request message being indicative

of a desire to receive appliance selection data (Reference A paragraph 1:

interactive application to diagnose problem with appliance), the appliance

selection data facilitating selection of a first home appliance (Reference F:

selection of individual home air conditioners), the appliance identification

message distinguishing a first home appliance from a second home appliance

(Reference F: selection of individual air conditioners). Whirlpool does not teach a

time slot selection message, a controller operatively coupled to the receiver, the

controller being structured to determine at least one available repair time slot

based on the appliance identification message and the geographical identification

message; and a transmitter operatively coupled to the controller, the transmitter

being structured to transmit the appliance selection data and data indicative of

the at least one available repair time slot to the client device via the wide area

network. Norand teaches a time slot selection message, a controller operatively

coupled to the receiver, the controller being structured to determine at least one

available repair time slot based on the appliance identification message and the

geographical identification message (Reference A paragraph 4 line 3-6,

dispatcher matches service order with personnel based on location and

availability); and a transmitter operatively coupled to the controller (Reference A

paragraph 4 line 6, wireless communication allows dispatcher to communicate

across network), the transmitter being structured to transmit the appliance

selection data and data indicative of the at least one available repair time slot to

the client device via the wide area network (Reference A paragraph 4 line 6-7,

dispatcher alerts customer of technician's estimated time of arrival). Norand

teaches its system of automation improves productivity (Reference A Paragraph

8 line 3) over manual service management of repair personnel. It would have

been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to

modify Whirlpool's invention to provide transmitting at least one available time

slot based on geography and appliance identification, as taught by Norand,

because it would improve the productivity of service personnel by taking

geography into account in their schedule and it would improve customer

satisfaction by assigning service calls based on the nearest service technician.

Regarding Claim 21, Whirlpool does not teach wherein the controller

comprises a microprocessor electrically coupled to a memory device, the

memory device storing a software program capable of execution by the

microprocessor, the software program being structured to cause the

microprocessor to determine at least one available repair time slot based on the

appliance identification message and the geographical identification message.

Norand teaches wherein the controller comprises a microprocessor (Reference A

paragraph 3 line 4, 386 MHz microprocessor) electrically coupled to a memory

device (Reference A paragraph 3 line 5, 8MB of FLASH and 8 MB of RAM

memory), the memory device storing a software program capable of execution by

the microprocessor (Reference A paragraph 4 line 1-2, Norand partnered with

Videre for its mobile workforce application software to run on its hardware

platform), the software program being structured to cause the microprocessor to determine at least one available repair time slot based on the appliance identification message and the geographical identification message (Reference A paragraph 4 line 2, mobile workforce application software; Reference A paragraph 4 line 2-6, software matches work orders with personnel based on geography and customer service history, including appliance identification). Norand teaches its system of automation improves productivity (Reference A Paragraph 8 line 3) over manual management of repair personnel. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Whirlpool's invention to provide a microprocessor based device with memory that schedules repair time based on appliance identification and geography, as taught by Norand, because it would improve the productivity of service personnel by automating the management of service calls based on the particular appliance and geography.

Regarding Claim 22, Whirlpool does not teach an appliance repair service provider database, wherein the controller comprises a scheduling module and a database interface module, the database interface module being operatively coupled to the appliance repair service provider database, the database interface module being structured to query the appliance repair service provider database for an appliance repair service provider associated with at least one of the appliance identification message and the geographical identification message. the scheduling module being structured to determine at least one available

repair time slot associated with the appliance repair service provider. Norand teaches an appliance repair service provider database (Reference B line 10, service information accessible by customers; Reference B line 6, database used in customer management), wherein the controller comprises a scheduling module and a database interface module (Reference A paragraph 4 line 3-4, integrated scheduling, location and workflow information), the database interface module being operatively coupled to the appliance repair service provider database, the database interface module being structured to query the appliance repair service provider database for an appliance repair service provider associated with at least one of the appliance identification message and the geographical identification message (Reference A paragraph 4 line 5-6, dispatchers use maps to link service orders with personnel), the scheduling module being structured to determine at least one available repair time slot associated with the appliance repair service provider (Reference A paragraph 4 line 7, customer alerted to technicians time of arrival). Norand teaches its system of automation improves productivity (Reference A Paragraph 8 line 3) over manual service management of repair personnel. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Whirlpool's invention to provide scheduling repair personnel based on geography and appliance identification, as taught by Norand, because it would improve the productivity of service personnel by taking into account geography in their schedule and it would improve customer satisfaction by assigning service calls based on the nearest service technician.

Regarding Claim 23, Whirlpool teaches wherein the receiver is structured

to receive a plurality of messages from a personal computer (PC). (Reference A,

this webpage can be transmitted over the internet from a PC). The examiner

takes official notice that Whirlpool's webpage would be transmitted from a PC

because it is old and well known in the art that PC's can locate and display

webpages.

Regarding Claim 24, Whirlpool teaches wherein the receiver is structured

to receive a plurality of messages from a client device via the Internet (Reference

A: Appliance selection drop-down menu can be used to transfer a plurality of

messages to the Whirlpool server).

Regarding Claim 25, Whirlpool teaches wherein the message decoder is

structured to decode a hypertext transport protocol (http) message (Reference A:

Whirlpool's appliance selection webpage is displayed as a http message).

Regarding Claim 26, Whirlpool teaches wherein the message decoder is

structured to decode an appliance model number (Reference C: model numbers

displayed as links to detailed appliance model webpages).

Regarding Claim 27, Whirlpool teaches wherein the message decoder is

structured to decode at least one of a zip code (Reference B: Zip code input).

Regarding Claim 28, Whirlpool teaches wherein the controller is structured

to cause the transmitter to transmit web page data (References A – F are all

webpages that transmit data).

Regarding Claim 29, Whirlpool teaches wherein the controller is structured

to cause the transmitter to transmit a list of model numbers (Reference C: list of

commercial dryer model numbers (Reference F: list of residential air conditioners).

Regarding Claim 30, Whirlpool does not teach a purchase history database operatively coupled to the controller, the purchase history database including a list of model numbers associated with previous purchases. Norand teaches a purchase history database (Reference B line 6, customer database) operatively coupled to the controller, the purchase history database including a list of model numbers associated with previous purchases (Reference A line 8, customer service history and parts availability, including specific model numbers). Norand teaches its system of automation improves productivity (Reference A Paragraph 8 line 3) over manual management of repair personnel. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Whirlpool's invention to provide a purchase history database including a list of model numbers associated with previous purchases, as taught by Norand, because it would improve the productivity of service personnel by automatically narrowing the number of models the service provider may have to service.

Regarding Claim 31, Whirlpool teaches wherein the controller is structured to cause the transmitter to transmit a digital picture of an appliance (Reference D, webpage contains digital picture of appliance).

Regarding Claim 33, Whirlpool teaches wherein the controller is structured to cause the transmitter to transmit data indicative of a search engine query area (Reference E, search engine query area from Whirlpool's website).

Regarding Claim 34, Whirlpool does not teach wherein the controller is structured to cause the transmitter to transmit a query message to a remote scheduling database associated with a predetermined appliance repair provider. Norand teaches wherein the controller is structured to cause the transmitter to transmit a query message to a remote scheduling database associated with a predetermined appliance repair provider. Norand teaches its system maintains customer databases (Reference B line 6) as well as customer service history (Reference A paragraph 2 line 8). Norand teaches its system provides integrated scheduling based on location of service providers (Reference A paragraph 4 line 5-6). Norand teaches its system of automation improves productivity (Reference A Paragraph 8 line 3) over manual service management of repair personnel. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Whirlpool's invention to provide querying a scheduling database associated with a predetermined appliance service provider, as taught by Norand, because it would improve the productivity of service personnel by automating their scheduling by querying a scheduling database.

Regarding Claim 35, Whirlpool does not teach wherein the controller is structured to determine the query message based on data included in the geographical identification message. Norand teaches wherein the controller is structured to determine the query message based on data included in the geographical identification message. Norand teaches a customer database (Reference B line 6) as well as the ability of the dispatcher to select service personnel based on geography (Reference A paragraph 4 line 4-5). Norand

teaches its system of automation improves productivity (Reference A Paragraph 8 line 3) over manual service management of repair personnel. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Whirlpool's invention to provide querying a scheduling database based on geography, as taught by Norand, because it would improve the productivity of service personnel by taking into account geography in their schedule and it would improve customer satisfaction by assigning service calls based on the nearest service technician.

Regarding Claim 36, Whirlpool does not teach wherein the decoder is structured to decode schedule data from a remote scheduling database associated with a predetermined appliance repair provider. Norand teaches wherein the decoder is structured to decode schedule data from a remote scheduling database associated with a predetermined appliance repair provider (Reference B line 6, customer database; Reference A paragraph 4 line 3-4, system provides integrated location, schedule and workflow; Reference A paragraph 4 line 6-7, dispatcher determines technician's next estimated time of arrival at customer). Norand teaches its system of automation improves productivity (Reference A Paragraph 8 line 3) over manual service management of repair personnel. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Whirlpool's invention to provide decoding schedule data from a remote database associated with a predetermined service provider, as taught by Norand, because it would improve the productivity of service personnel by taking into account geography in their schedule and it would

improve customer satisfaction by assigning service calls based on the nearest service technician.

Claims 10 and 32 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Whirlpool.com in view of Norand and further in view of ReliableParts.com appliance parts website (Reference A: "Reliable Parts", archive.org ReliableParts.com website of 6/10/1998).

Regarding Claims 10 and 32, Whirlpool and Norand do not teach wherein the step of transmitting the appliance selection data comprises the step of transmitting data indicative of a model number input area. ReliableParts does teach wherein the step of transmitting the appliance selection data comprises the step of transmitting data indicative of a model number input area (Reference A, "Model number of the appliance?" input area). Norand teaches its system of automation improves productivity (Reference A Paragraph 8 line 3) over manual service management of repair personnel. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Whirlpool's and Norand's collective invention to provide transmitting appliance selection data indicative of a model number input area, as taught by ReliableParts, because it would automate the model number identification of an appliance and improve the ease with which specific models are identified.

Conclusion

5.   The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

US Patent 5,943,652 by Sisley discloses a resource assignment and scheduling system.

US Patent 5,983,073 by Ditzik discloses a computing system utilizing wireless communications.

US Patent 5,511,108 by Severt discloses a handheld computing device used in the field to test electrical equipment.

Archive.org's webpage of Appliance411.com of 3/2/2000.

Archive.org's webpage of A1Appliance.com of 12/1/1998.

Archive.org's webpage of GE.com appliances of 1/23/1998.

Archive.org's webpage of GE.com appliances of 10/23/1999.

Archive.org's webpage of A1Appliance.com refrigerator parts of 12/6/1996.

Archive.org's webpage of Frigidaire.com of 2/9/1999.

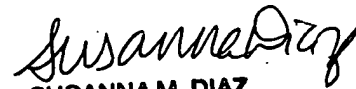Archive.org's webpage of repairclinic.com on appliances of 11/28/1999.

6.   Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jonathan G. Sterrett whose telephone number is 703-305-0550. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-6.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on 703-305-9643. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JGS 11-16-04

SUSANNA M. DIAZ
PRIMARY EXAMINER

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